United Nations CERD/C/SR.2437

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

Distr.: General
17 May 2016

Original: English

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
Eighty-ninth session

Summary record of the 2437th meeting
Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Friday, 6 May 2016, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Ms. Crickley

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Consideration of reports, comments and information submitted by States parties under article 9 of the Convention (*continued*)

Combined thirteenth to fifteenth periodic reports of Namibia (continued) (CERD/C/NAM/13-15 and CERD/C/NAM/Q/13-15)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Namibia took places at the Committee table.*

2. **Ms. Shapwa** (Namibia) said that the Namibia Statistics Agency did not compile information on the ethnic composition of the population or disaggregated data on the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights by the various population groups, as that was not in line with the Government's policy of reconciliation and nation building. However, the Namibian Labour Force Survey conducted in 2014 revealed that more than 700,000 persons aged 15 and over had been employed during 2014. The unemployment rate for the same period had stood at 28.1 per cent, which was marginally higher than the rate in 2013.

3. All ethnic groups were represented in Parliament and in all spheres of public life. If a certain ethnic minority was not represented in the Government, the President was entitled to appoint a competent representative to Parliament. Even those marginalized groups that had previously been unable to participate in public life owing to a lack of education had since been afforded opportunities to facilitate their involvement.

4. Namibia was currently in the process of reviewing its anti-discrimination legislation. In the wake of the case of *Kauesa v. Minister of Home Affairs* 1995, the Government was considering an amendment to the articles on hate speech and to the definition of racial discrimination under the Prohibition of Racial Discrimination Act of 1991. The intention was to bring the definition of racial discrimination into line with article 1 of the Convention. The case of *Government of the Republic of Namibia and Others v. Mwilima and all the Other Accused* in the Treason Trial 2002 demonstrated that the Convention was enforceable by Namibian courts, as provided for under article 144 of the Namibian Constitution. Furthermore, in order to ensure the appropriate application of the Convention, workshops were held for judges of the High Court and the Supreme Court in which they received training on the Convention.

5. The Community Courts Act provided for the establishment of community courts, the appointment of justices, the application of customary law by such courts, and the right for community courts to appeal to other courts, among other provisions. Community courts had existed for centuries and had enjoyed jurisdiction over all kinds of legal cases before the establishment of common law courts in Namibia. However, their jurisdiction was currently limited to cases concerning customs and traditional practices. The Act ensured that such courts were regulated and did not violate any constitutional rights. Appeals against the decisions of community courts could be made to a magistrate's court. Applicants for community court judgeships had to demonstrate familiarity with the traditions of the community in question. Their applications were considered by the Ministry of Justice. Community courts fell within the category of lower courts and the Government did not interfere in their proceedings. They performed a dispute settlement function while promoting peace and stability within traditional communities.

6. Given the complexity of customs and traditions within Namibia, the bills on customary marriage and intestate succession had been the subject of a long drawn-out consultation process involving the traditional community authorities. It was likely that the bills would be submitted to Parliament during the current financial year.

7. Under the Children's Status Act, Act No. 6 of 2006, all children were treated equally with regard to inheritance. One of the main aims of the Act was to eliminate discrimination against children born out of wedlock. Inheritance issues in regard to such children were resolved by the High Court, as in the case of *Frans v. Paschke and Others* 2007. Under the Communal Land Reform Act, land rights were guaranteed for women married under both civil and customary law.

8. The definition of fundamental rights and freedoms under section 1 of the Ombudsman Act was being reviewed in order to include economic, social and cultural rights. The proposed amendments would give the Office of the Ombudsman a broader mandate in line with the Paris Principles. For instance, provisions allowing the Ombudsman to carry out announced and unannounced visits to places of detention were being considered. During the period under review, four complaints concerning racial discrimination had been submitted to the Office of the Ombudsman, only one of which had been substantiated. In 2008, the Ombudsman had held public hearings on the issue of racial discrimination, preceded by a media campaign to raise awareness of the mandate and objectives of the Office. However, the outcome had been inconclusive owing to low public participation. Under its current annual plan of activities, the Ombudsman investigated cases of racism in order to make recommendations on how to prevent such cases from recurring.

9. With regard to land reform policy, the Agricultural (Commercial) Land Reform Act of 1995 allowed aggrieved individuals to appeal against the decisions of statutory bodies in land disputes in order for corrective action to be taken. Women were protected under the Land Reform Programme which had been revised to allow applications for land tenure from married women. The Government continued to ensure the allocation of land to disadvantaged communities including the San community, displaced persons, persons with disabilities, landless persons and persons living in overcrowded areas. An amendment to the Agricultural (Commercial) Land Reform Amendment Act authorized the Minister responsible for land matters to expropriate land, subject to fair compensation. Under the National Resettlement Policy, the San community was identified as the main target group for resettlement.

10. The Employment Equity Commission administered the Affirmative Action (Employment) Act of 1998 in order to ensure black people's access to managerial and supervisory posts. Relevant employers were required to submit an affirmative action report detailing the representation of black persons at almost every level of employment across all economic sectors. In 2014-2015, almost 700 employers had reported on approximately 168,000 employees: persons from disadvantaged communities had accounted for 87 per cent of the total number of employees but only 37 per cent of them had been employed in supervisory posts; 84 per cent of the employees reported on had been black but they had occupied only 56 per cent of managerial positions; 39 per cent of managerial positions had been held by women, 9 per cent by foreign nationals, and 1 per cent by persons with disabilities.

11. National language policies were in place to promote the use of local languages in public services. For example, interpreters were available in all courts for persons who did not speak English, and individuals were entitled to use their mother tongue in a number of public services such as hospitals. In schools, children had to be taught in their mother tongue during their primary education and there was a special focus on the San and Ovahimba communities. Teaching materials were also provided in different languages. Regional authorities were required to implement such policies. With regard to the media, the public broadcaster aired television programmes in eight local languages including San. Certain newspapers contained sections written in indigenous languages, such as the State-owned newspaper New Era.

12. The Government had put an end to segregation in the education system. All children were guaranteed the right to education under the Constitution. Primary education was compulsory and free of charge up to the final primary grade or the age of 16, whichever came first. As of 2016, secondary education was also free. Measures were in place to keep indigenous children in school and there was a mobile schools programme for nomadic children. No mobile schools had been closed down although the maintenance of such schools posed logistical challenges.

13. The School Development Fund had been abolished, releasing parents from the obligation to pay financial contributions to public primary schools. A programme was in place which provided children with at least one free school meal per day. The programme had had a positive impact on attendance and examination pass rates. In order to encourage school attendance by San children, the Government provided financial assistance to schools to cover their transport costs. Himba children were entitled to attend school in traditional dress. Regarding girls' education, one of the goals of the national plan of action 2001-2015 had been to ensure that all children, particularly girls from marginalized communities, had access to free primary education of good quality.

14. In order to ensure the participation and consultation of indigenous communities in regard to policymaking issues affecting them, the San Development Programme had been transferred from the Office of the Prime Minister to the Office of the President. The Programme involved annual visits to the San community by representatives from the Office of the Prime Minister. The Programme had since been renamed the Division for Marginalized Communities owing to its focus on improving the quality of life of other marginalized communities, in addition to the San, by ensuring their economic integration through access to education, land, health care, and employment. The Office of the Prime Minister had appointed development planners in areas where such communities lived in order to assist with their developmental needs. Moreover, the Government promoted the appointment of persons from marginalized communities in both the public and the private sector.

15. All indigenous peoples had recognized traditional leaders who were able to influence national issues and who were consulted on the drafting of policies aimed at the development of their communities. Indigenous men and women served on government bodies to facilitate consultation with indigenous communities. For example, the deputy minister in charge of the Division for Marginalized Communities under the Office of the President was of San origin. Under the Traditional Authorities Act, any traditional community could apply to the Government for recognition of their traditional authority. In the case of the Khwe San community, their application had been referred to the Committee on Tribal Disputes, which had found that the Khwe San community had not retained an autonomous land base as they had claimed. The Council of Traditional Leaders, to which the matter had later been referred for further investigation, had reached the same conclusion.

16. A total of eight farms had been procured for the resettlement of marginalized communities since 2005. They were used for animal husbandry, tourism and crop production.

17. In addition to livestock many small farms had gardens and produced charcoal and firewood, often for sale. More than 18,000 hectares had been allocated to four San communal farm areas in the north and west of the country. San residents of urban areas could also make a request to their traditional authorities to be allocated communal land. The local chiefs concerned were consulted for their input and permission. Nearly 300 families had received land in that manner. More than 30 brick and 80 temporary homes had been built for the San in a number of areas. Government ministries, including the Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sport and Culture, the police and defence forces, and the private

sector, were working to increase recruitment of members of the San and other marginalized groups.

18. Regional government offices were responsible for helping the San and other marginalized groups, including the elderly, with burial costs. All citizens, including the San and other marginalized groups, were eligible for old-age pensions. Her Government was working to improve the standard of living of women and children in general. Mobile teams travelled the country to inform the population of their assistance entitlements.

19. Efforts to combat HIV/AIDS, including among the San population, were carried out in the context of the Overall Health Policy Framework 2010-2020, developed in consultation with all stakeholders. Approximately 7.6 million Namibian dollars had been spent on HIV/AIDS in 2005-2012. Anti-retroviral therapy was available across the country at the 35 district hospitals and major dispensaries. There had been significant improvement in the treatment, survival rates and quality of life of those affected.

20. Regarding San land rights, she noted that article 100 of the Constitution stated that all land resources belonged to the State if not otherwise lawfully owned. Currently 24 per cent of agricultural land was owned by white farmers and 3 per cent by foreign interests. The remaining land was included in the communal land bank and could be allocated as needed, in trust, to communities, including disadvantaged groups. The San were granted 99-year inheritable leases for the lands allocated to them. The purpose of the Communal Land Reform Act was to reduce poverty through a more balanced distribution of land resources, and thereby increase self-sufficiency and employment.

21. Every effort was being made to increase access to education for children from marginalized groups, including the San and Himba. Kindergartens had been opened in all villages, schools were located close to their communities and there were quotas for the hiring of teachers from those communities. There was a stay-in-school campaign. A policy document on national options for educationally marginalized children had been adopted in 1998.

22. **Ms. Böhlke-Möller** (Namibia), referring to the issue raised in paragraph 3 (g) of the list of themes, said that rape was a problem for all groups in the country, not only the San, and that the situation was often aggravated by alcohol and drug abuse. Victims were encouraged to report rape but unfortunately few did so. Her Government was working to increase awareness of that scourge in marginalized communities, for example through services provided by the Ministry of Health.

23. The State party was working to develop the fishing sector and promote fish as part of its efforts to increase employment and improve the population's diet. Marginalized groups were allotted fishing quotas. Emphasis was also placed on added-value activities through local onshore processing of the fish caught, which also increased employment opportunities, including for marginalized groups. Great progress had been made since the launch of the Fish Consumption Promotion Trust in 2001 to promote fishing and proper cooking and consumption of fish as an affordable and nutritious food. It was widely available in shops and was incorporated in the school meal programme.

24. With regard to the impact of the Affirmative Action (Employment) Act, she said that according to the 2013-2014 report of the Employment Equity Commission racially disadvantaged men made up 49 per cent of the working population, racially advantaged men 3 per cent, men with disabilities 3 per cent, and non-Namibian citizens 1 per cent. The figures for women from racially disadvantaged and advantaged groups were 42 and 2 per cent, respectively. No statistics were available on the marginalized communities specifically. Her Government was working to increase employment opportunities for marginalized women through development activities, for example training in tailoring and baking. Many San women produced crafts for sale.

25. All non-citizens, including refugees and asylum seekers, had full access to health care and social services. Her Government respected the principle of non-refoulement. Refugees were housed in the Osire Refugees Settlement; they could request permission from the Administrator to leave the settlement for up to 14 days, whether they stayed in Namibia or went abroad. Permits were also granted for those wishing to study outside the settlement or who had found a job. Most of the refugees were Angolan; more than 2,000 Angolan refugees who had not chosen voluntary repatriation by 2013 had been integrated into Namibian society. She recalled that Namibia had entered a reservation to article 26 of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees giving it the right to designate a place or places for principal reception and residence for refugees or to restrict their freedom of movement if considerations of national security so required or made it advisable.

26. The Ministry of Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare had been established in 2015 and a strategy to eradicate poverty had been elaborated in 2015. In October 2015 the President had declared a war on poverty, stressing that all Namibians had the right to a life of dignity, with access to employment, health care, potable water, sanitation and education. Social grants had been allocated to reduce poverty. The tax system also contributed to poverty reduction: income tax increased in proportion to income; persons with income under 50,000 Namibian dollars paid no income tax; basic foodstuffs were exempt from value added tax. A solidarity tax on higher incomes would soon be introduced, the proceeds of which would be allocated to a poverty reduction fund. Food banks were being established across the country, especially in urban areas where families had no productive land. The Government was committed to ensuring that no child went hungry.

27. Great progress had been made in addressing the problems of segregation and inequality that had existed at independence. The poverty rate had dropped from 59.3 per cent at independence to 28.7 per cent in 2010, and continued to drop, thanks in large part to fiscal policies and increased grants for the elderly. The number of persons receiving subsidies had increased: for example, in 2014 some 70 per cent of persons with disabilities had received social assistance grants. The number of persons with access to electricity had almost doubled by 2011, including 30 per cent of persons living in rural areas as compared to none at independence.

28. The literacy rate had increased from 78 per cent in 1991 to 90 per cent in 2011, and the number of children attending school had increased from 439,000 to more than 600,000 in the same period. Since independence, total student loans had increased from 17 million Namibian dollars to nearly one billion, gross domestic product (GDP) from 8 billion to 141 billion Namibian dollars in 2014, and GDP per capita from 5,600 to 63,000 Namibian dollars. The national budget had increased from 2.1 billion to 66 billion Namibian dollars, and public spending on education as a percentage of GDP from 5.8 per cent to 8.6 per cent.

29. She explained that, under the relevant legislation, all unallocated State land and land not legally owned was communal land belonging to the State but occupied by the traditional occupants and used in the public interest. She undertook to provide further information on the effectiveness of the Affirmative Action (Employment) Act, especially for the black population; she noted that the Employment Equity Commission issued certificates of compliance for affirmative action plans but acknowledged that more must be done to ensure equal opportunity. She assured the Committee that the police electronic disaggregated database posed no threat to the right to privacy; it was accessible only to the police as a means of increasing their efficiency, for example by keeping track of witnesses. She said that 581 secondary and tertiary-level students from marginalized communities were receiving assistance for their studies; that figure was in addition to the students not receiving special assistance.

30. With regard to the African Union Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, she said that before ratifying any international treaty the State

party ensured that its domestic legislation would be in conformity with those instruments. With regard to developments relating to the colonial era genocide, she said that her Government and the Government of Germany had each appointed an envoy to serve as liaison between their governments and the communities concerned on that issue.

31. **Ms. Shapwa** (Namibia) said that large tracts of land had to be allocated to only one individual or family because the prevailing dry climate made it necessary for farms to comprise between 2,000 and 5,000 hectares of land according to regional conditions, in order to be viable. Communal lands were State-owned and included all lands not in urban areas or considered commercial agricultural lands. They were allocated to individuals and families by the traditional chiefs in consultation with the local population and in accordance with the Communal Land Reform Act. Those occupying that land did not therefore technically own the land but neither could they be arbitrarily removed.

32. **The Chair** said that the State party should continue its efforts to develop the fishing industry as a way of increasing employment and providing an alternative food source to the population.

33. **Mr. Avtonomov** (Country Rapporteur) asked whether the delegation could provide written copies of its remarks to the Committee. He welcomed the delegation's explanations regarding communal lands although he noted that indigenous peoples often preferred to have community ownership of the land they occupied. He also welcomed the explanations of the roles of traditional, including San, chiefs, and the role of community courts. While he understood the State party's desire to promote unity of identity in the country, he stressed the importance of developing disaggregated data in order to better capture the relative situation of disadvantaged groups and help the Committee make recommendations to improve their lot. Lastly, he asked for information on the situation of the albino population.

34. **Mr. Kut**, noting that Namibia had not acted on the Committee's request to provide information within one year on its follow-up to specific recommendations set out in the Committee's previous concluding observations (CERD/C/NAM/CO/12), reminded the delegation of the importance it attached to receiving such information.

35. Although the Committee always welcomed any measures that contributed to the preservation of minority groups that would not otherwise be able to survive, it was also very mindful of the need to ensure that the Convention applied to everyone throughout the country. He therefore asked what precautions the Government was taking to ensure that, in the application of customary law by community courts, all individuals remained protected under the Convention.

36. He requested updated information on the State party's efforts to prevent, combat and punish hate speech and on how the relevant laws were applied. He asked whether there had been any court cases involving hate speech or discriminatory comments made by government officials.

37. **Ms. Shapwa** (Namibia) said that it would be very difficult for her Government to go against its own policy on the collection of disaggregated data, as the aim was to maintain unity and not to divide people into groups along ethnic or tribal lines. If there was a pressing need for such data, however, it could be collected.

38. There had not been any reported cases of mistreatment of albinos. They were treated on an equal footing with other citizens and were provided with free treatment for health conditions related to sun exposure. The legislation governing hate speech was currently under review. If it was found that there was a need for a provision explicitly prohibiting hate speech, such a provision could be introduced. In Namibia, hate speech generally occurred between members of dominant groups and was not directed at minority or marginalized groups.

39. Community courts dealt only with violations of traditional customs and practices, while criminal cases involving acts such as murder or rape were tried by the ordinary courts. Confusion about the situation might stem from the fact that, in murder cases, grievances between the families of the victim and the accused were dealt with by the community courts as a way of maintaining peace between the families, but the accused would still be tried for the offence by the ordinary courts.

40. There had not been any reported cases of hate speech or discriminatory comments by government officials. Most officials were well aware that they were prohibited from discriminating against members of marginalized groups in any way. Indeed, those persons generally received priority treatment in government offices.

41. **Mr. Kut** asked whether there was a mechanism in place to ensure that community courts respected the Convention in the application of customary law.

42. **Ms. Shapwa** (Namibia) said that no courts in Namibia applied any law that contradicted the laws of the nation. If a decision by a community court was thought to be in violation of Namibian law, it could be appealed before a magistrate's court.

43. **Mr. Dyakugha** (Namibia) said that there had been a case in which a community court had violated national law by handing down a sentence of corporal punishment, which had then been overturned by a higher court. As all international conventions to which Namibia was a party were part and parcel of Namibian law, they would be upheld by the courts in cases where the decisions of community courts were appealed.

44. **Ms. Shepherd** asked what sectors of the economy were dominated by the white minority in comparison with other ethnic groups. She also asked whether there was racism against blacks in Namibia and, if so, how it was manifested. Referring to the imprisonment of Rastafarians for up to 20 years for possession of small amounts of ganja, and the case of a Rastafarian schoolboy who had been sent home and told to cut his dreadlocks because his appearance did not conform to the school rules, she asked to what extent the cultural rights of Rastafarians were respected in Namibia. Lastly, she wished to know who produced the history books and other teaching materials used in schools and who had access to tertiary education.

45. **Ms. McDougall** asked why there had been so little interest in public hearings on racial discrimination. Despite the many programmes and policies in place to reduce poverty, the poverty level in Namibia remained high. She asked the delegation to comment on that situation and on whether there was a need to intensify those programmes or to create more social grant programmes. She wondered whether the Government had sufficient control over the country's resources, particularly those that had been held by the white minority prior to independence. She wished to know specifically about the ownership of mines and fisheries and whether those resources were being reallocated.

46. **Ms. Shapwa** (Namibia) said that the white minority remained dominant in certain sectors of the economy, such as banking, construction and tourism. Those were sectors that required intensive capital, and it was therefore difficult for people from previously disadvantaged groups to obtain the necessary resources to enter those sectors. The Development Bank of Namibia and the SME Bank had been established to help members of previously disadvantaged groups overcome those difficulties. Fishing quotas were allocated only to members of previously disadvantaged groups. Some members of those groups found it necessary to enter into partnerships with white persons already established in those industries. The ownership profile was changing, however, in fishing, tourism, construction and other sectors.

47. While racism in Namibia most commonly took the form of tribalism, there had been cases of racism against blacks. All forms of racism were prohibited under the Constitution,

and the need for further legal prohibitions was currently under consideration. Namibian law was not discriminatory against Rastafarians, and redress was always available to anyone who believed themselves to be a victim of discrimination. Possession of ganja was prohibited, and all cases would be prosecuted regardless of the amount possessed.

48. **Ms. Pickering** (Namibia) said that the National Institute for Educational Development had been set up in 1990 to design, develop and monitor the implementation of national curricula for pre-primary, primary and secondary schools, evaluate educational materials and textbooks, develop teaching manuals, support the nationwide network of teacher resource centres and provide teacher training. Students studied Namibian, rather than European, history, using textbooks written by local historians.

49. **Ms. Shepherd** said that the delegation had not yet responded to questions on access to free tertiary education and respect for the ritualistic aspects of the heritage and culture of the Rastafarian community.

50. **Ms. Shapwa** (Namibia) said that Rastafarians were free to perform their rituals on the condition that they did not violate national legislation. Tertiary education was provided on a fee-paying basis; however, the Government provided bursaries for students from economically disadvantaged communities. The Ombudsman's Office intended to further raise public awareness of racial discrimination.

51. **Ms. Pickering** (Namibia) said that the rate of extreme poverty in Namibia currently stood at 13 per cent, whereas the overall poverty rate was 27 per cent.

52. **Ms. Shapwa** (Namibia) said that the Government controlled the nation's natural resources. The Ministry of Mines and Energy was responsible for issuing mining and exploitation licences, which were currently mainly reserved for previously disadvantaged citizens and any foreign business partners they might have. The Ministries of Fisheries and Marine Resources, Lands and Resettlement and Environment and Tourism had set up quota systems exclusively for previously disadvantaged citizens.

53. **The Chair** asked whether certain industries were still controlled by white owners.

54. **Ms. Shapwa** (Namibia) said that, at the time of independence, the Government had chosen not to nationalize private property, opting rather for the gradual introduction of shared ownership. Consequently, several mines remained in the hands of members of the white community.

55. **Mr. Dyakugha** (Namibia) said that the Government had a 50 per cent stake in a number of mines and had set up a State-run mining company known as Epangelo Mining.

56. **Mr. Murillo Martínez** said that he would welcome more detailed information on measures relating to compensation for the genocide committed by the German colonial authorities against the Herero and Himba peoples and on the legal framework for public consultations. Electronic police databases could be a double-edged sword.

57. **Mr. Kemal** said that the State party was to be congratulated on its efforts to encourage previously disadvantaged citizens to directly exploit the country's natural resources, in particular fish stocks. He asked whether the problems relating to the operation of a mobile school programme for the Himba had been resolved.

58. **Mr. Yeung Sik Yuen** said that clarification of the difference between customary and common law would be welcome. Noting that paragraph 19 of the State party's report contained a reference to discriminatory laws on inheritance, he asked whether any other examples existed of provisions of customary law that were contrary to the Convention.

59. **The Chair** asked what measures had been taken on the basis of the finalized report on intestate succession referred to in paragraph 22 of the State party's report.

60. **Mr. Yeung Sik Yeun** asked whether women and girls faced gender-based discrimination in the context of aid distribution.

61. **Ms. Mohamed** said that she wished to know whether domestic workers from Namibia came from one specific ethnic group in particular and whether national languages had a written form and were taught in schools.

62. **Mr. Clase** (Namibia) said that all forms of institutional discrimination in the fields of education, health care and public service were illegal under the Racial Discrimination Prohibition Act and the Constitution. Those instruments did not specifically make provision for intertribal racism and hate speech, although amendments to the Act in that regard were currently being considered.

63. Namibia applied customary, common and statutory law, all of which must be in line with the Constitution. Under the Constitution, common and customary law had equal status but must comply with statutory law. Customary courts must enforce the provisions of the Convention. Statutory law took precedence over customary law in cases where the latter was not in line with the Convention. A law was currently being prepared in order to align customary practices with statutory law in terms of the age of marriage. There were a large number of different ethnic groups in Namibia, each of which must be consulted prior to the introduction of any legislation.

64. The electronic police database had been introduced in order to facilitate the tracing of witnesses, access to information on victims and the collation of disaggregated data on different types of offences and of crime statistics, rather than to provide for the profiling of any one group of persons.

65. The Law Reform and Development Commission had been set up in 1991 to review national legislation and to make recommendations to Parliament regarding amendments to laws on a number of issues, including inheritance and racial discrimination. Prior to making any proposals, the Commission must carry out consultations with all the ethnic groups present in Namibia. Parliament could commission further consultations if necessary.

66. **Ms. Shapwa** (Namibia) said that the Governments of Namibia and Germany had appointed envoys to deal with the issue of the genocide of the Herero and the Himba. Furthermore, Namibia had set up a technical committee, which was currently involved in discussions with the communities concerned, as well as with the envoys and the two Governments in question.

67. Domestic workers came from all of the State party's various ethnic groups, with the exception of the white community, and were mainly women. Local languages had a written form and were taught in schools.

68. **Mr. Clase** (Namibia) said that the long-running mobile school programme for the Himba community was still fully operational, despite the difficulties involved in running such a service in a mountainous region. Permanent schools had been built in three villages and were equipped with solar panels and accommodation for teaching staff. Students from marginalized communities received State grants covering tuition fees, books, accommodation and transport.

69. **Mr. Avtonomov** (Country Rapporteur) said that the dialogue with the delegation of Namibia had been extremely constructive and that the State party had done much to build a new society free of racial discrimination.

70. **Ms. Shapwa** (Namibia) said that the State party was committed to combating racial discrimination and reviewing existing relevant legislation.

71. **The Chair** said that the delegation of Namibia was to be congratulated on the honest, open approach it had adopted to the shortcomings affecting national legislation and the complex issues of redistribution and ownership of national resources.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.